



**CITY OF AKRON, OHIO**  
**POLICE DIVISION**  
**CRAIG V. GILBRIDE, CHIEF OF POLICE**

NUMBER P-2009-062	EFFECTIVE DATE November 25, 2009	RESCINDS P-2000-062 Issued 4-24-00
SUBJECT K-9 Procedure		ISSUING AUTHORITY Chief Craig V. Gilbride

## **I. POLICY**

The K-9 team is a valuable law enforcement tool for use in criminal apprehension, evidence location, narcotic detection, search and rescue, and for promoting favorable public relations. K-9 teams will be specially trained and utilized in the daily operation of the police department.

## **II. DEFINITIONS**

- A. K-9 handler – A police officer who has been specially trained in the care, handling, and utilization of a K-9.
- B. K-9 team – A police officer and his assigned K-9.
- C. Narcotic K-9 – Trained only in the detection of illegal narcotics.
- D. Patrol K-9 – A dog trained in area search, evidence search, structure search, criminal apprehension, tracking of suspects or lost persons, and officer protection. The primary purpose of this type of K-9 is that of a locating tool. Upon location of a suspect, the secondary purpose is use of force.
- E. Dual purpose K-9 – Trained in patrol K-9 duties and one other special duty or scent detection; i.e., narcotic, cadaver, explosive, or arson detection.
- F. Deployment – The use of a K-9 in one of the trained and certified areas. This includes public demonstrations.
- G. K-9 Apprehension – Any time the K-9 is deployed and plays a clear and well-documented role in the capture of a person. The mere presence of a K-9 at the scene of an arrest shall not be counted as an apprehension.
- H. Bite Ratio – The number of K-9 apprehensions accomplished by means of a dog bite divided by the total number of K-9 apprehensions (both with and without a bite). The numerator of this ratio shall include accidental bites.

- I. Verbal Warning – Must state that a police K-9 will be released if the suspect fails to make himself known or fails to surrender. The warning will be issued no less than two separate times and should state clearly that the dog will bite. Adequate time will be given before the K-9 is deployed to allow the suspect to surrender. Additional warnings may be necessary depending on the size of the search area or structure.

### III. PROCEDURE

#### A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. All police department K-9s will be owned by the City of Akron, licensed and certified in accordance with all state and local regulations.
2. The Patrol K-9 teams will be placed within the Uniform Subdivision and the narcotic K-9 teams will be assigned to the Investigative Subdivision for day to day operations.
3. The K-9 commander will coordinate general staff supervision for training, equipment needs, K-9 certification, care or special K-9 details.
4. Patrol K-9 teams will patrol in modified, specially equipped vehicles designed for such duty and clearly marked K-9. The narcotic K-9 teams will also have specially equipped vehicles, however they may be unmarked.
5. The Patrol K-9 teams may be assigned to help cover a specific district during manpower shortages or emergencies and should still be known as their respective K-9 car numbers.
6. Requests for off duty K-9 teams must be approved by a shift commander. Notification will be made through Safety Communications.
7. K-9 training will be provided to maintain the team's proficiency and state standards. This will be a duty assignment.
8. No employee will initiate interaction with a K-9 without the handler's approval.

#### B. DEPLOYMENT

1. A K-9 handler will evaluate each situation and determine if the use of the K-9 is technically feasible. Generally, the decision to deploy the K-9 shall remain with the handler, however, a shift commander sufficiently apprised of the situation may decide **not** to deploy the dog. If the shift commander countermands a handler's decision to deploy the K-9, he shall indicate in writing the reason.
2. K-9 teams should remain primarily available to respond to K-9 calls for service and will not generally be used for report writing calls, traffic accidents, or to handle other matters that will take them out of service for extended periods of time.

3. K-9 teams may be utilized to apprehend a suspect after considering all pertinent information. K-9 handlers will also use this information in determining whether to utilize the K-9 on or off leash in any type of deployment. The information should include, but is not limited to:
  - a. The suspect's approximate age.
  - b. The nature of the suspected offense.
  - c. Any potential danger to the public or officers at the scene if the K-9 is deployed.
  - d. The potential for injury to officers or the public caused by the suspect if the K-9 is not deployed.
  - e. The degree of resistance, if any, the suspect has shown.
  - f. The potential for escape or flight if the K-9 is not utilized.
  - g. Whether the suspect is reasonably suspected to have a weapon.
  - h. Whether the suspect is being directly pursued by an officer on foot.
4. Verbal warnings will be given prior to deployment in area and structure searches, and when possible, prior to criminal apprehensions and foot pursuits.
5. When a K-9 makes an apprehension, the handler will call off the dog at the first possible moment the K-9 can be safely released.
6. When a K-9 locates an armed barricaded suspect, the K-9 call ends.
7. K-9 teams shall only be used for crowd control during riots, potential riot conditions, or other unauthorized assemblies where there is a reasonable likelihood that injury to officers or others could occur.
8. K-9 teams shall not be directed by anyone to search people for weapons or narcotics.
9. When a K-9 team has been requested for a search:
  - a. Officers must understand that it will be difficult or impossible for the K-9 team to be effective if the search area is contaminated.
  - b. Officers should secure the perimeter and clear unauthorized persons from the area.
  - c. No one should enter the structure or area until the K-9 handler determines the number of cover officers needed to assist.

## 10. Narcotics detection

### a. Vehicle

- 1) In order to have a K-9 sniff a motor vehicle, the officer involved must have a reasonable suspicion based on articulable facts that the vehicle contains some drug related contraband. An exception to this is a special operation or preplanned event in which motor vehicles will be included in the search such as a school search for narcotics.
- 2) When the K-9 is being led around the outside of the vehicle, all persons must be restricted from the area.
- 3) It is the responsibility of the requesting officer or back-up officer to maintain observation of the operator and any occupants.
- 4) If the interior will be searched by a K-9, the requesting officer will first secure any narcotics or paraphernalia in plain view and immediately advise the K-9 handler of its location. All food and dangerous items shall be removed.
- 5) It is the responsibility of the requesting officer to ensure that any recovered contraband or evidence is properly tagged.

### b. Structures

- 1) The requesting officer will conduct a search of the area with the K-9 handler. This search will be conducted without the K-9 to secure any narcotics, paraphernalia, or hazards in plain view.
- 2) All persons on the premises must be removed or placed in one area prior to beginning the K-9 search. The only exception to this policy will be in the event of a consent search. The owner or the owner's representative will be permitted inside the structure.
- 3) It is the responsibility of the requesting officer or cover officer to maintain observation of the owner or representative.
- 4) It is the responsibility of the requesting officer to ensure that any recovered items are tagged.
- 5) K-9 handlers should be involved in the briefings on large scale drug operations if K-9 use is anticipated.

### C. PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. Requests for K-9 demonstrations shall be forwarded to the K-9 commander for consideration and assignment.
2. Demonstrations can include obedience, article search, narcotic detection, agility, social interaction, and education.
3. Any type of apprehension demonstration must have prior approval from the K-9 commander.

### D. INJURY TO K-9 HANDLER OR K-9

1. If a handler is seriously injured or becomes incapacitated, the K-9 will be very protective and will probably not allow officers or paramedics to approach the handler. Immediately contact another handler. If another handler is not available, contact a decoy officer.
2. If the K-9 is loose or around the handler, attempt to detain or secure the K-9 in the back of a K-9 cruiser, a regular cruiser, room or enclosure before approaching the handler by:
  - a. Taking the leash and leading the K-9 away from the injured handler, securing the K-9; or
  - b. Retrieving the training sleeve from the trunk of a K-9 cruiser, and while wearing the sleeve on the arm, approach the K-9 with the sleeved arm held towards the K-9. Let the K-9 take hold, then drag or back the K-9 away by using the sleeve or apply a leash and secure the K-9 in a cruiser or a nearby room or enclosure, then slip the sleeve off allowing the K-9 to keep it in its mouth. If a K-9 has a sleeve in its mouth, it will not release in order to re-engage the person, the K-9 will remain on the sleeve; or
  - c. Call an animal warden to detain the K-9; or
  - d. Put the K-9 down by deadly force.
3. If both the handler and K-9 are seriously injured:
  - a. A supervisor will arrange to have the injured K-9 transported to an approved veterinary hospital.
  - b. The transporting officer shall remain at the hospital until relieved by a handler or supervisor.

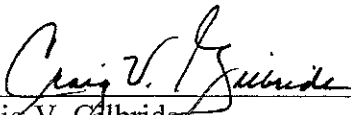
## F. REQUEST FOR DEPARTMENT K-9 FROM AN OUTSIDE AGENCY

1. A shift commander will make the determination if the request will be approved and ensure the agency is notified whether or not a K-9 team is responding.
2. An off duty K-9 team may be called in to assist another agency with the approval of a shift commander.

## G. REPORTING

1. A use of force investigation will be conducted whenever injury or alleged injury is caused by a department K-9 whether or not the injury is accidental.
2. The K-9 handler will notify his immediate supervisor who will initiate a preliminary use of force investigation, which will be forwarded to a K-9 supervisor for the follow-up and completion of the investigation.
3. The handler will complete a K-9 Use/Arrest Report after **any** deployment. If any force other than the deployment of the K-9 is used, the handler will also complete a Use of Force/Resisting Arrest report.
4. Photographs of individuals involved in either an intentional or accidental K-9 use of force shall be taken whether or not the individual was injured. Photographs of any wounds attributed to or inflicted by the K-9 will be taken both before and after treatment, if possible.
5. The K-9 supervisor will forward the completed investigation to the Uniform Subdivision commander.
6. The K-9 commander will track the number of K-9 deployments, the number of K-9 apprehensions, and the bite ratio of each K-9 and for the unit as a whole and submit a report yearly to the Chief of Police. Any bite ratio that exceeds 20% will be cause for further scrutiny.

By Order Of,

  
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Craig V. Gilbride  
Chief of Police

Date November 18, 2009